



Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

**2011–2012
Estimates**

Report on Plans and Priorities

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Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

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Leader of the Government in the
House of Commons

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Message from the Chief Electoral Officer

The 2011–2012 fiscal year brings both new and familiar challenges to Elections Canada.

With a minority government now in its third year, the possibility of a general election has increased. Most of the agency's programs will begin the fiscal year having just been ramped up, and we will need to maintain a high level of operational readiness during the coming period.

For electoral events called after the winter of 2011, electors will benefit from the administrative changes we successfully tested in the fall 2010 by-elections. These changes include greater accessibility of voting sites, the ability of specific groups of electors to use the voter information card as proof of name and address at selected voting sites and increased outreach efforts for electors residing in long-term care facilities and seniors' residences.

The May 2011 national census will set in motion the decennial process to readjust the boundaries of Canada's electoral districts to ensure fair and balanced representation. While this redistribution is carried out by independent commissions in each province, the agency enables the process by providing support and technical expertise. We expect the commissions to begin their work in the winter of 2012, once the Chief Statistician has provided the Chief Electoral Officer with the population counts from the 2011 census. By that time, Elections Canada will have put in place the tools and resources the commissions require.

Elections Canada will continue to pursue transformative initiatives in 2011–2012, guided by its strategic plan and its enduring objectives of increasing accessibility, trust and engagement. We remain committed to completing the work we have started in this regard. However, two factors will influence our progress over the next fiscal year:

- the requirement to dedicate a large portion of our personnel to election readiness and potentially conducting a general election
- the impact of fiscal restraint measures arising from the March 2010 federal budget

Our transformative efforts next year are aimed at continuing work we have already begun; these efforts include:

- further improving the accessibility of polling sites
- allowing electors to confirm their information on the voters list and make certain changes on-line between elections
- continuing the development of a pilot project to test Internet voting in a by-election to be held after March 2013
- developing a new advertising campaign aimed at young people during general elections
- launching a three-year outreach action plan to address barriers faced by specific target groups
- increasing our role in facilitating the registration of political entities
- completing the foundation for our renewed information technology infrastructure, which will enable us to deliver new, enhanced and robust electronic services to Canadians

As Parliament reviews the recommendations for legislative change included in my report following the 40th general election, Elections Canada will continue to provide technical expertise and support as required. We will also seek further opportunities to collaborate with Parliament and engage stakeholders in our efforts to modernize the electoral framework.

During 2011–2012, Elections Canada will continue its management agenda, which is aimed at retaining and developing its talent, reinforcing its internal governance and increasing its collaboration with Elections Ontario.

Readers will notice that this *2011–2012 Report on Plans and Priorities* is the first to be based on our new Program Activity Architecture. Elections Canada has developed this planning and reporting structure to more accurately reflect its mandate and the results it delivers to Canadians.

Marc Mayrand
Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

Section 1: Agency Overview

1.1 Summary Information

Raison d'être and Responsibilities

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, commonly known as Elections Canada, is an independent, non-partisan agency that reports directly to Parliament. Its mandate is to:

- be prepared at all times to conduct a federal general election, by-election or referendum
- administer the political financing provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*
- monitor compliance with and enforce electoral legislation
- conduct voter education and information programs
- provide support to the independent commissions in charge of adjusting the boundaries of federal electoral districts following each decennial census
- carry out studies on alternative voting methods and, with parliamentary approval, test on-line voting processes for future use during electoral events

In fulfilling its mandate, Elections Canada appoints, trains and supports 308 returning officers and retains the services of approximately 30 field liaison officers across Canada. It also maintains the National Register of Electors, which is used to prepare preliminary lists of electors at the start of electoral events, as well as electoral geography information, which provides the basis for maps and other geographic products used during electoral events.

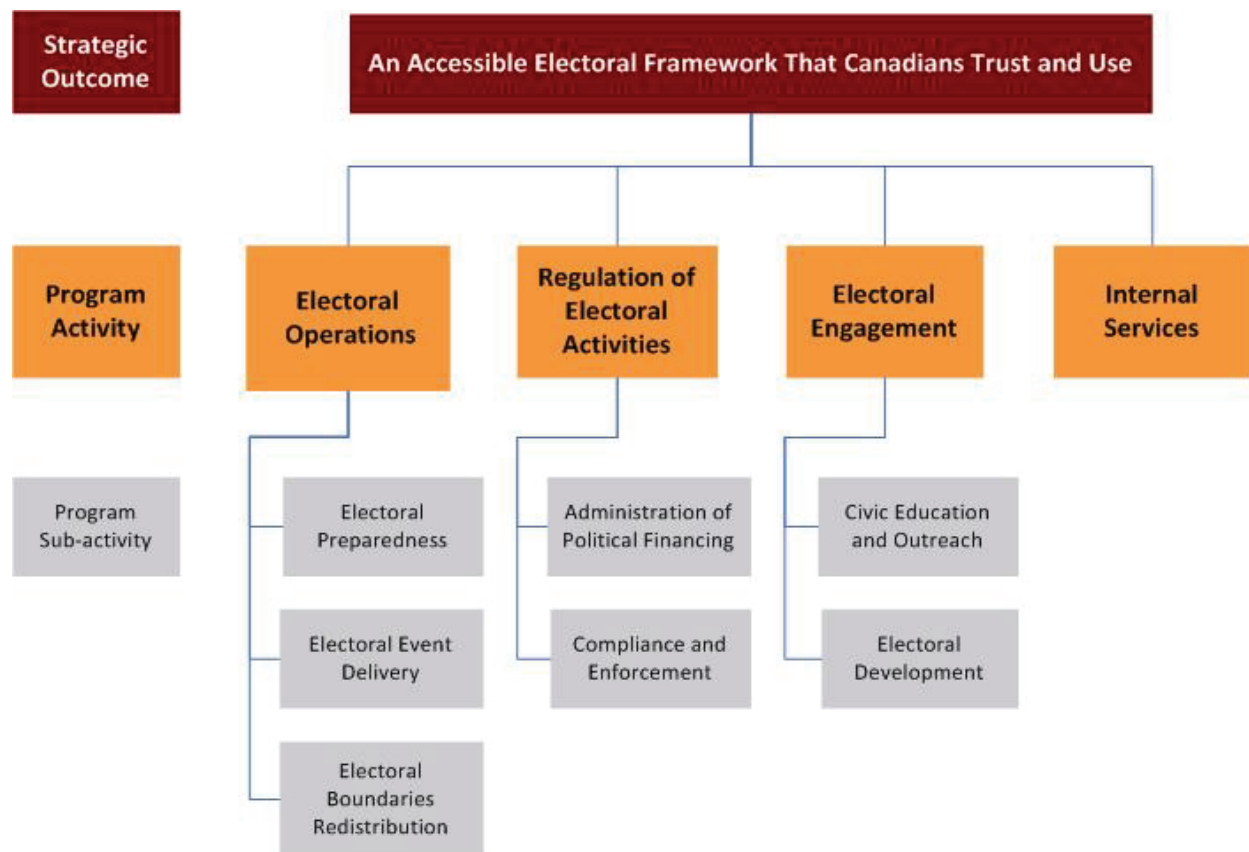
The agency also:

- registers political entities, including political parties, electoral district associations, candidates, leadership contestants, third parties that engage in election advertising and referendum committees
- administers the allowances, reimbursements and subsidies paid to eligible candidates, registered political parties and auditors
- monitors compliance with the *Canada Elections Act*, including compliance with political financing rules, during and between elections
- discloses information on registered parties and electoral district associations, registered parties' nomination and leadership contestants, candidates, third parties and referendum committees, including their financial returns
- recommends to Parliament amendments for the better administration of the *Canada Elections Act* by submitting a recommendations report after each general election as well as by providing expert advice when Parliament studies electoral reform

In addition, the Chief Electoral Officer appoints the Commissioner of Canada Elections and the Broadcasting Arbitrator. The role of the Commissioner is to ensure that the *Canada Elections Act* and the *Referendum Act* are complied with and enforced. The Broadcasting Arbitrator is responsible for allocating free and paid broadcasting time among political parties and for arbitrating disputes that may arise between parties and broadcasters.

Strategic Outcome and Program Activity Architecture

The following chart illustrates Elections Canada's new Program Activity Architecture (PAA). This framework of four program activities contributes to achieving our strategic outcome.



Program Activity Architecture Crosswalk

On August 6, 2010, Elections Canada received approval from Treasury Board to modify its PAA for 2011–2012. The new PAA now better reflects the results that the agency delivers to Canadians. A crosswalk that compares the old architecture with the new, and also describes the redistribution of financial resources, can be found on the Elections Canada Web site at <http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/est/rpp2011&document=paa&lang=e>.

1.2 Planning Summary

This section summarizes the agency's plans, priorities and expected budgets for the next three fiscal years.

Financial Resources (\$ thousands)			Human Resources (FTEs)*		
2011–2012	2012–2013	2013–2014	2011–2012	2012–2013	2013–2014
122,351	122,357	122,357	506	506	506

*Elections Canada's appropriation includes funding for 404 FTEs. An additional 102 FTEs will be funded through Elections Canada's statutory authorities for maintaining continuous readiness. Previous reports on plans and priorities have not included the latter.

Program Activities in Support of the Strategic Outcome

The first table below summarizes the performance indicators and targets used to measure the success of Elections Canada's strategic outcome. The second table shows the four program activities – our mandated priorities – intended to ensure that these strategic outcome targets are met.

Strategic Outcome: An Accessible Electoral Framework That Canadians Trust and Use
Performance Indicators
Canadian Electoral Framework Index: Accessibility component score
Canadian Electoral Framework Index: Trust component score
Canadian Electoral Framework Index: Use component score

Program Activity	Forecast Spending 2010–2011 (\$ thousands)	Planned Spending (\$ thousands)*		
		2011–2012	2012–2013	2013–2014
Electoral Operations	43,751	35,030	35,031	35,031
Regulation of Electoral Activities	40,024	38,399	38,402	38,402
Electoral Engagement	8,709	8,583	8,583	8,583
Internal Services	45,495	40,339	40,341	40,341
Total Planned Spending	137,979	122,351	122,357	122,357

*Planned spending includes an appropriation for the salaries of indeterminate staff and statutory funding for transfer payments to eligible political entities, on-going operations and contributions to employee benefit plans. Planned spending does not include costs related to general elections, by-elections or heightened readiness activities. These costs explain the variance between 2010–2011 forecast spending and planned spending for the next three fiscal years.

Contribution of Priorities to Strategic Outcome

The following tables summarize the contribution of Elections Canada's operational and management priorities to its strategic outcome.

Operational Priority	Type	Description and Plan for Meeting Priority
Maintain readiness to deliver electoral events	Previously committed to	Elections Canada will ensure that its programs are ready to be executed during a general election at any time during the coming fiscal period. Administrative improvements successfully tested in the fall 2009 and 2010 by-elections will be available during electoral events called after February 2011.
Continue to work toward our strategic objectives	Previously committed to	<p>The agency will continue to improve the accessibility of the electoral process so that it remains responsive to electors' needs and societal change. This includes continuing to engage its stakeholders.</p> <p>The agency will provide parliamentarians with support and technical expertise to formulate legislative amendments resulting from the Chief Electoral Officer's most recent recommendations report.</p>
Enable the electoral boundaries readjustment process to be launched	Previously committed to	In 2011–2012, Elections Canada will complete the preparatory work required to enable the 10 provincial electoral boundaries commissions to carry out the readjustment. The process is scheduled to start in the winter of 2012, after we receive the 2011 census population counts from the Chief Statistician.

Management Priority	Type	Description and Plan for Meeting Priority
Support excellence in talent management	New	Elections Canada's new annual human resources action plan will carry out our four-year human resources strategy by focusing on three critical pillars: acquiring the best talent, developing it to its fullest potential and encouraging our employees to continue their careers at Elections Canada.
Improve internal processes and consolidate agency offices	New	In the coming year, Elections Canada will reinforce its procurement and project management practices, implement an investment management plan for its information technology (IT) assets and begin preparing to relocate its Ottawa-based personnel to a single location in Gatineau, Quebec, in 2013.

Management Priority	Type	Description and Plan for Meeting Priority
Make full and optimal use of our resources	Previously committed to	<p>Elections Canada has reviewed the recommendations resulting from its A-base review. In 2011–2012, the agency will select a few high-priority recommendations on which to focus.</p> <p>To manage in the current fiscal context, the agency will also seek to achieve efficiencies.</p> <p>We will also leverage our partnership with Elections Ontario in our common efforts to develop voter education programs, conduct an on-line voting pilot project, and identify and manage common polling sites.</p>

Operating Environment

In the 2011–2012 fiscal year, Elections Canada’s agenda will be dominated by two drivers: the increased possibility of a general election and the need to prepare our support for the redistribution process. These circumstances will test our agility by forcing us to excel at both rapid operational deployment and longer-term initiatives.

Increased Possibility of a General Election

Elections Canada has been operating in a minority government context for over six years. The fact that the current minority government is now in its third year increases the possibility of a general election. This means that in 2011–2012, we will need to dedicate a large portion of our resources to operational readiness, and our capacity to undertake new transformative initiatives will be limited.

Preparing Support for the Redistribution Process

Representation in the House of Commons is readjusted after each decennial (10-year) census to reflect changes and movements in Canada’s population; this is in accordance with the *Constitution Act, 1867* and the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*. The readjustment of federal electoral boundaries is carried out by independent provincial commissions, but Elections Canada is responsible for giving them administrative, technical, financial and legal support. The commissions are expected to start their work in the winter of 2012, and Elections Canada must ensure that the resources to support them are in place by that time.

Risk Analysis

Two main risks will require our attention over the next fiscal year.

Pursuing Longer-Term Changes in the Context of a Minority Government

Parliament has begun to review the Chief Electoral Officer's recommendations for legislative change following the 40th general election. The changes sought are required to fully implement the longer-term direction set out in our *Strategic Plan 2008–2013*. This relates especially to providing Canadians with on-line electoral services and reducing the regulatory burden imposed by the complexity of the current federal political financing rules. A general election may take place before Parliament has had an opportunity to conclude its review of our recommendations, and the timing of anticipated legislative change remains unknown.

Other initiatives, such as transitioning our field applications to a new information technology (IT) environment and phasing out associated legacy systems, are made more difficult by the fact that we cannot count on a definite period of “downtime” to complete testing and phase-in activities.

Further Fiscal Restraint Measures

We have to continue adjusting to the three-year fiscal restraint measures that resulted from the March 2010 budget. This has an impact on Elections Canada's appropriation, which covers the salaries of our permanent staff. For the next two fiscal years, we will not be funded for salary increases and will therefore need to absorb any increases resulting from collective agreements.

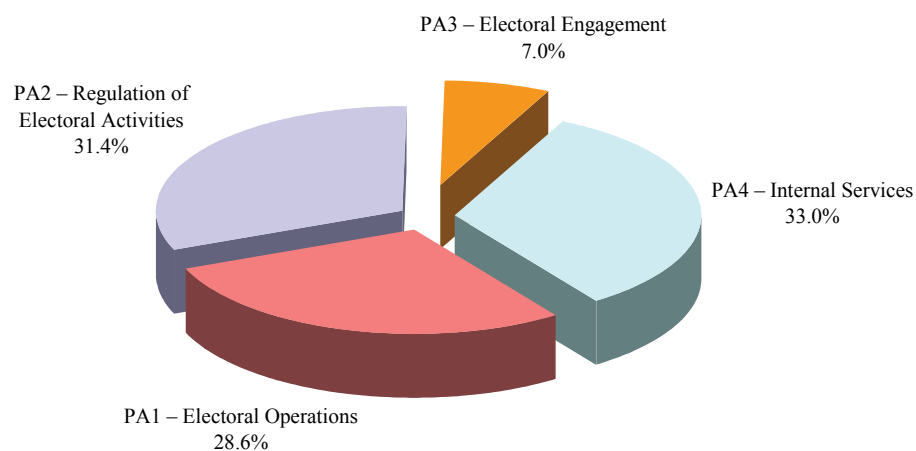
Expenditure Profile

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer is funded by an annual appropriation, which provides for the salaries of permanent full-time staff, and by the statutory authorities set out by the *Canada Elections Act*, the *Referendum Act* and the *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*. The statutory authorities provide for all other expenditures, including the costs of electoral events, reimbursement of election expenses to eligible candidates and parties, quarterly allowances for eligible political parties, the cost of redistributing electoral boundaries and expenses incurred by the Commissioner of Canada Elections, or on his behalf, to enforce the legislation. There are two further statutory items: the salary of the Chief Electoral Officer and contributions to employee benefit plans.

2011–2012 Forecast Spending by Program Activity

In 2011–2012, Elections Canada plans to spend \$122 million to meet the expected results of the four program activities that contribute to our strategic outcome. The following chart shows the allocation of funding by program activity.

Forecast Spending by Program Activity



Estimates by Vote

Estimates by vote are presented in the 2011–2012 Main Estimates, which are available at www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/est-pre/20112012/me-bpd/info/info-eng.asp.

Section 2: Analysis of Program Activities in Support of the Strategic Outcome

2.1 Strategic Outcome

Elections Canada operates with the goal of achieving one strategic outcome:

An Accessible Electoral Framework That Canadians Trust and Use

Achieving this strategic outcome is facilitated by a Program Activity Architecture (PAA) that consists of four program activities. The first three program activities benefit Canadians directly and are described in the table below.

Program Activity	Expected Result
1. Electoral Operations	The electoral process is accessible and administered fairly and efficiently.
2. Regulation of Electoral Activities	Canadians have confidence in the fairness of the administration and enforcement of electoral legislation.
3. Electoral Engagement	Canadians make informed decisions about their engagement in the electoral process.

The fourth program activity, Internal Services, supports Elections Canada in achieving the expected results of the first three program activities.

Benefits to Canadians

These program activities support Elections Canada's strategic outcome in its goal of providing a fair, transparent and accessible electoral process that results in giving Canadians the opportunity to exercise their democratic rights to vote and be a candidate. When electors actively participate in selecting their representatives, they contribute to the overall health of Canada's democracy, a foundation of our society.

2.2 Program Activity: Electoral Operations

This program activity allows Elections Canada to deliver fair and efficient electoral events whenever they may be required so that Canadians are able to exercise their democratic right to vote in a federal general election, by-election or referendum by providing an accessible and constantly improved electoral process responsive to the needs of electors.

	2011–2012	2012–2013	2013–2014
Planned Spending (\$ thousands)	35,030	35,031	35,031
Human Resources (FTEs)*	212	212	212

*See note under first table in Section 1.2.

Key Expected Result	Key Performance Indicator*
The electoral process is administered fairly and efficiently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of elections per elector Percentage of Canadians who believe that Elections Canada administers elections in a fair manner
Elections Canada is prepared to hold electoral events whenever they are called.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of electoral offices that are fully functional within seven days of the start of an electoral event
Canadians have opportunities to exercise their democratic right to vote.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of non-voters who report not voting for administrative reasons Percentage of polls that open on time Percentage of electors who are satisfied with their experience of casting a ballot
Canadians have the information and support they need to participate in elections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of Canadians who are aware of the variety of voting methods available Percentage of Canadians who know how and where to vote
Canadians are provided with timely electoral results that accurately reflect the choices they have made.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of polls reporting preliminary results after they close Variance between preliminary results and validated results Variance between reported results and results after judicial recounts
Independent electoral commissions have the capacity to carry out their obligations under the <i>Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of commissioners who are satisfied with the services and support they have received from Elections Canada

*Targets for these performance indicators are under development.

Planning Highlights

During 2011–2012, a number of planned initiatives within the Electoral Operations program activity will contribute to achieving Elections Canada’s strategic outcome.

One of Elections Canada’s goals is to augment the voter registration process to allow electors to register on-line. This system will not replace current registration processes, but it will improve service to electors, especially young people, by offering an additional way to register. The project will be implemented in two phases.

1. Phase I will enable electors to go on-line between elections to confirm that they are on the voters list and to update certain information, such as their address. This phase will be implemented by fall 2011.
2. Phase II will see these capabilities integrated into our newly centralized election systems and ready for a by-election pilot project in spring 2012. Legislative change will be required for full implementation, and this has been addressed in the Chief Electoral Officer’s recommendations report following the 40th general election.

In addition, a pilot project offering on-line voting to a target group of Canadians is slated to occur during a by-election or general election after March 2013. Internet voting will allow specific groups of voters to take advantage of a new, convenient, accessible and secure method of exercising their right to vote. The results of the pilot project will inform policy making about future on-line electoral services. The 2011–2012 fiscal year will see the project’s business process and security requirements defined; this effort will include the engagement of both the potential user community and parliamentarians.

Elections Canada plans to accept the voter information card (VIC) as proof of name and address for selected groups of electors, including students who live in campus residences, electors residing in seniors’ residences and long-term care facilities and Aboriginal electors living on reserves. This initiative, tested in the November 2010 by-elections, will be applied at selected voting sites in a general election called after February 2011.

We will analyze and plan how we can extend this opportunity to all electors in the longer term as well as examine new methods for producing and delivering the VIC. This initiative will broaden the options for Canadians who currently have difficulty meeting the proof-of-address requirement before voting.

The coming year will also see us continuing our work to enhance voting services on two fronts. The first will be conducting an analysis to develop a new model for operating polling sites that is more cost-effective and that better serves electors and candidates’ representatives.

The second voting service enhancement follows the decision in *James Peter Hughes and the Canadian Human Rights Commission v. Elections Canada*, which required Elections Canada to take a number of measures to improve the accessibility of polling sites. We want to build on the opportunities offered by this important decision and are undertaking a multi-year initiative to enhance the accessibility standards for local Elections Canada offices, as well as the voting site selection process, starting in 2011–2012.

An assistive voting device allows voters with disabilities to mark their ballots independently and in secret, thereby reinforcing and promoting Elections Canada's commitment to increasing voter accessibility and engagement. The use of this device was piloted during the fall 2010 by-election in Winnipeg North, and the results of our evaluation will be shared with Parliament once it has been completed.

Reports from returning officers during recent electoral events indicate – and this is supported by available data – that recruiting a sufficient number of reliable and competent election officers has become a major challenge. To help alleviate this situation, Elections Canada will take further measures to support returning officers in their recruiting efforts, mitigate the outcome of not finding enough election officers and increase Canadians' awareness of election day employment opportunities. In addition, we will continue our partnership with provincial and territorial election administrators to help improve overall recruitment and training strategies.

The *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act* sets out Elections Canada's role in electoral boundary redistribution. This involves supporting Canada's ten provincial boundaries commissions, which are responsible for reviewing representation in the House of Commons according to criteria defined in the Act. The provincial commissions are expected to be established in March 2012, after we have received the official population counts from the 2011 census. Fiscal year 2011–2012 constitutes Phase I of the readjustment process: preparation and planning. This will require us to finalize all documentation and other critical support information, plus hire and train new personnel, before the provincial commissions start their work. These activities will provide all of the crucial resources and guidance that the commissions need to conduct a fair and transparent readjustment process. Also in the coming year, we will begin engaging stakeholders, including parliamentarians, in support of the process.

Benefits for Canadians

Plans for the Electoral Operations program activity for 2011–2012 include seeing electors able to confirm and make certain changes to their own voter registration information on-line and experience improved accessibility at voting locations. The Internet voting pilot project will serve as an important first step toward expanded on-line voting in subsequent elections, further enhancing the accessibility of the Canadian electoral process. The upcoming electoral boundaries readjustment process will ultimately realign representation in the House of Commons to ensure that it remains a fair and balanced reflection of the country's demographic distribution.

2.3 Program Activity: Regulation of Electoral Activities

This program activity provides Canadians with an electoral process that is fair, transparent and in compliance with the *Canada Elections Act*. Within this program activity, Elections Canada is responsible for administering the political financing provisions of the Act. This includes monitoring compliance, disclosure and reporting of financial activities and enforcing electoral legislation.

	2011–2012	2012–2013	2013–2014
Planned Spending (\$ thousands)	38,399	38,402	38,402
Human Resources (FTEs)*	71	71	71

*See note under first table in Section 1.2.

Key Expected Result	Key Performance Indicator*
Canadians have confidence in the fairness of the administration and enforcement of electoral legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of Canadians reporting confidence in the fairness of Elections Canada's regulatory activities
Candidates have confidence in the fairness of the administration and enforcement of electoral legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of candidates reporting confidence in the fairness of Elections Canada's regulatory activities
Political entities are transparent in the use of their financial resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of financial returns that are submitted within four months of election day Number of substantive corrections and amendments required to returns
Political entities understand and comply with their obligations and responsibilities under Canada's electoral legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of candidates who understand their obligations and responsibilities regarding contribution limits, as established by the <i>Canada Elections Act</i> Number of cases that are subject to compliance measures

*Targets for these performance indicators are under development.

Planning Highlights

In order to use existing electoral regulation resources more efficiently, Elections Canada has established a Compliance Assistance Unit and put in place an internal policy on administrative compliance. The new unit will apply specific criteria from its policy to determine whether or not apparent breaches of the *Canada Elections Act* warrant a formal referral to the Commissioner of Canada Elections; those that do not will instead be addressed through administrative educational measures. As a result, each instance of non-compliance will be dealt with in a manner that best reflects its seriousness and its impact on the integrity and administration of the political financing regime.

Elections Canada has also adapted some of its compliance audit programs for political entities to ensure that resources are used in a manner that is commensurate with the level of risk presented. At the same time, the agency has initiated a quality assurance review process that will provide an additional means of ensuring that compliance audits are conducted in accordance with the professional standards established in its Political Financing Audit Manual.

Elections Canada is in the process of developing a new, consolidated electronic registration system for political entities. It is expected that the Political Entities Registration System will increase the efficiency of the registration process, improve the accuracy of registration data and provide better information management and reporting. The new system should be implemented by the fall of 2011.

To increase awareness of the political financing legislative requirements, Elections Canada will continue to offer training sessions across the country. At the same time, we will give our geographically dispersed clients better accessibility to training by continuing to expand our library of on-line tutorials.

Benefits for Canadians

Additional efforts within this program activity will help political entities recognize and comply with their obligations under the *Canada Elections Act* by improving their access to information and training on political financing rules.

2.4 Program Activity: Electoral Engagement

This program activity promotes and sustains the Canadian electoral process. It provides Canadians with electoral education and information programs so that they can make informed decisions about their

engagement in the electoral process. It also aims to improve the electoral framework by consulting and sharing electoral practices with other stakeholders.

	2011–2012	2012–2013	2013–2014
Planned Spending (\$ thousands)	8,583	8,583	8,583
Human Resources (FTEs)*	55	55	55

*See note under first table in Section 1.2.

Key Expected Result	Key Performance Indicator*
Canadians make informed decisions about their engagement in the electoral process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of Canadians who believe that they can make an informed decision about their engagement
Canadians understand the importance of voting and the value of participating in the electoral process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of Canadians who understand the importance of voting Percentage of Canadians who understand the value of participating in the electoral process
Elections Canada and international electoral stakeholders improve their capacity to better administer electoral processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of international and domestic stakeholders who intend on incorporating shared best practices
Parliamentarians have access to evidence-based information, allowing them to make informed decisions about existing and emerging electoral issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of parliamentarians satisfied with the quality of the Chief Electoral Officer's recommendations report

*Targets for these performance indicators are under development.

Planning Highlights

The agency's plans for Electoral Engagement in 2011–2012 include reaching out to the electorate, improving its collaboration with Parliament and developing partnerships with its provincial and international electoral counterparts.

The coming year will see the start of a new three-year outreach action plan aimed at making the voting process easy and convenient for all electors by understanding the barriers, whether physical or informational, faced by specific groups of electors, then designing and implementing programs to reduce or eliminate them. Key strategies of the action plan include engaging these groups and conducting research to develop our own awareness and understanding of existing and potential barriers; developing new pilot projects aimed at addressing access barriers that have already been identified through research and consultation; enhancing the current electoral reminder program to help Canadians understand how, where and when to vote in federal elections; and continuing and refining civic education programming to make educators, children

and young people aware of the role of voting, the importance of voting and the rights to which future electors are entitled.

We will also work toward improving our support to Parliament. We will design new approaches for developing further recommendations for legislative change by enhancing our consultations with Canadians, including parliamentarians, political parties, members of the academic community and other key stakeholders, and by strengthening the conduct of sound research, both internally and externally. We will also regularly engage stakeholders on both legislative and administrative electoral issues through workshops, briefing meetings and other avenues. As well, we will provide technical advice on new legislative initiatives to parliamentary committees as required.

Building on the corporate research framework that was developed in 2010–2011, we will pursue our research initiatives in 2011–2012 to provide Canadians and parliamentarians with a strong knowledge base on key electoral issues, including voter participation, Internet voting and political financing. The research results will inform our policy making and support parliamentarians' review of legislative initiatives.

Finally, Elections Canada will continue to work collaboratively with provincial and territorial electoral management bodies and seek partnership initiatives during the next fiscal year. As part of a strategic alliance with Elections Ontario, we will be developing and delivering a common, in-class civics education program for grades 5 and 10 as part of Ontario's mandatory civics education curriculum. The goals of the program are to make young people aware of the role of voting and their future rights as electors as well as to help them understand the importance of voting and the value of participating in the electoral process. The program will be fully implemented, and an evaluation completed, during the 2011–2012 fiscal year.

Benefits for Canadians

By improving Elections Canada's ability to collaborate with Parliament, this program activity will strengthen the process of reviewing electoral legislation, and it will also provide parliamentarians with new opportunities for engagement on specific issues.

Our outreach action plan will help build an awareness and understanding, among target groups, of the value of Canadian democracy, the critical contribution of electoral participation within it and voting procedures in general. Similarly, education initiatives directed at young people and coordinated with Elections Ontario will foster civic knowledge and values to help ensure an informed future electorate.

Finally, our research initiatives will ensure that policy making is informed and responsive to societal changes.

2.5 Program Activity: Internal Services

In addition to carrying out program activities that directly benefit Canadians, Elections Canada requires internal services to help fulfill its mandate. These services focus on human resources modernization, performance management, legal services, internal audits, financial and human resources management and information technology (IT).

	2011–2012	2012–2013	2013–2014
Planned Spending (\$ thousands)	40,339	40,341	40,341
Human Resources (FTEs)*	168	168	168

*See note under first table in Section 1.2.

Planning Highlights

The 2011–2012 planning highlights within Elections Canada’s Internal Services program activity include implementing recommendations from our recent A-base review, improving our internal capacity, continuing the transformations outlined in our Human Resources Strategy for 2009–2013, enhancing key aspects of our IT infrastructure and governance framework, and consolidating our work environment.

Implementing Recommendations of A-Base Review

In 2009–2010, Elections Canada completed an internal review to assess whether it had the necessary financial and human resources to deliver on its mandate over the next five years. The report confirmed the existence of funding gaps and made recommendations on funding levels, as well as ways to improve program efficiency and address funding pressure. In 2010–2011, further analyses of the A-base review conclusions were conducted.

Given the current economic climate and government cost-containment measures, we are not in a position to seek additional funding at this time. The focus for 2011–2012 will be on implementing, where feasible, the recommendations to improve program efficiency as well as aligning the agency’s resources with its highest priorities. An implementation plan has been developed, and ongoing reporting to senior management on progress has been adopted.

Talent Acquisition, Development and Retention

Elections Canada’s *Strategic Plan 2008–2013* identifies human resources as a critical enabler. Our 2011–2012 human resources action plan is built around the acquisition, development and retention of agency talent and as such is consistent with the priorities identified in the Clerk of the Privy Council’s *Public Service Renewal Action Plan*.

In 2011–2012, we will continue our commitment to professional development and will expand our current talent management program to include middle managers. We are also aiming to increase the representation of designated groups, particularly women, and foster employee retention by fully implementing our new employee recognition program and undertaking initiatives to improve health and wellness in the workplace. As part of our continuing

commitment to a healthy work environment, we will continue to use various tools, such as employee surveys and the exit interview program, to measure our progress and develop training in areas where improvement is sought.

Returning Officer Professionalization

For its field work force, Elections Canada is undertaking a professionalization initiative to ensure that all returning officers (ROs) embody competence and integrity in administering the electoral process in their respective federal electoral districts. In the coming year, the agency will better align the role of the RO with the current management and leadership principles of industry and government, and assist the ROs in meeting the required standards of accountability and results. The longer-term benefit of this initiative will be an increased trust in the administration of elections by electors and candidates.

Renewing Technology

Elections Canada will continue to renew its IT systems and infrastructure with a view to improving existing electoral services and offering new ones. In keeping with the objectives of our strategic plan, 2011–2012 will see us test a new centralized elector information repository, a new Web platform and a new, robust and scalable infrastructure.

During the next year, we will also deliver a new electronic registration system. Within two years, we will have implemented a new, comprehensive, centralized, Web-based field services application suite, which will replace legacy and end-of-life applications dedicated to revising voters lists, paying local Elections Canada office staff and administering polling sites. The underlying IT investments in 2011–2012 will enable us to introduce new electronic services to support our strategic objectives of trust, accessibility and engagement.

Strengthening Governance

Elections Canada will continue in 2011–2012 to reinforce its project management practices by strengthening the oversight of IT-supported projects and implementing a corporate directive on managing projects. This directive will define the management, reporting and financial requirements for our projects and clarify roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.

We also intend to continue adopting more modern and cohesive risk management practices to realize efficiencies, foster innovation and improve decision making. Our efforts will build on the corporate risk profile developed in 2011–2012.

Specific Partnering Initiatives with Elections Ontario

Elections Canada will be undertaking a number of initiatives with Elections Ontario in 2011–2012. These will focus on our common objectives to develop voter education programs, conduct an on-line voting pilot project, and identify and manage common polling sites.

Internal Audit

The internal audit function is a key component of Elections Canada's management framework. By the end of January 2011, Elections Canada had updated its three-year Risk-Based Audit Plan

for the remaining two years, 2011–2012 and 2012–2013. This updated plan will provide Elections Canada with assurance of the soundness of its management processes. In addition, it will give senior management critical information for delivering on the agency’s mandate and for assessing governance, risk management and control activities. Priorities for 2011–2012 will be carrying out audits of asset management and security management as well as Phase 2 of the audit of returning officers’ management practices.

Consolidating Workspace

Elections Canada’s Ottawa employees are currently housed in six locations. An internal consolidation project will bring these employees together into a single location, in Gatineau, Quebec, with a move-in date of June 2013. When this relocation is complete, our real estate portfolio will be reduced from twelve buildings to two: the location in Gatineau and our distribution centre in Ottawa.

By reducing the number of locations, we will realize organizational and cost efficiencies in the administration of our business and facilities. In 2011–2012, we will begin to prepare for this relocation.

Section 3: Supplementary Information

3.1 Financial Highlights

The future-oriented financial statements presented in this *2011–2012 Report on Plans and Priorities* are intended to serve as a general overview of Elections Canada's financial operations. These financial highlights are prepared on an accrual basis to strengthen accountability, increase transparency and improve financial management. In 2011–2012, the first year that Elections Canada is providing future-oriented financial statements, this report is presenting only the Future-Oriented Condensed Statement of Operations and accompanying notes.

Future-oriented financial statements can be found on the Elections Canada Web site at <http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/est/rpp2011&document=fut&lang=e>.

Future-Oriented Condensed Statement of Operations (Unaudited)

For the year ended March 31 (\$ thousands)

	Future-Oriented 2011–2012
Total Expenses	134,273
Total Revenues	5
Net Cost of Operations	134,268

A total of approximately \$134.3 million in expenses is forecast to be spent to achieve Elections Canada's strategic outcome: an accessible electoral framework that Canadians trust and use. Elections Canada's expected revenues of \$5 thousand will offset its expenses accordingly.

The variance between the figures above and the planned spending amounts provided in this report relate to such items as services without charge received from other government departments, amortization, tangible capital asset acquisitions, and severance and vacation pay liability adjustments.

3.2 Supplementary Information Tables

All electronic supplementary information tables included in this *2011–2012 Report on Plans and Priorities* can be found on the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's Web site at www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rpp/2011-2012/info/info-eng.asp.

- Details of transfer payment programs
- All upcoming internal audits over the next three fiscal years

Section 4: Other Items of Interest

Strategic Plan 2008–2013

A copy of the agency's strategic plan can be downloaded from the Elections Canada Web site at www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=abo&dir=stra&document=index&lang=e.

New Legislation

An analysis of proposed amendments to electoral legislation with a potential impact on our business can be found on the Elections Canada Web site at <http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/est/rpp2011&document=legislation&lang=e>.

Judicial Decisions and Proceedings

An analysis of judicial decisions and proceedings that may affect electoral legislation can be found on the Elections Canada Web site at <http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/est/rpp2011&document=legislation&lang=e>.

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